

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for oxidizing one of a gate dielectric layer and a cell dielectric layer on a portion of a silicon substrate in an atmosphere comprising:  
raising the temperature of the silicon substrate to a temperature of at least about 600°C.;  
providing a gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O, the gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O having a pressure of at least about five atmospheres for contacting at least a portion of the silicon substrate using a catalytically disassociated gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O; and  
contacting a portion of the gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O with a catalytic matrix consisting of one or more metals for forming a catalytically disassociated gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O for contacting at least a portion of the silicon substrate.
2. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:  
forming an oxide layer on the one of a gate dielectric layer and a cell dielectric layer on the portion of the silicon substrate.
3. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:  
forming an oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate.
4. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:  
oxidizing a tantalum oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate.
5. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:  
forming a barium strontium titanium oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate.
6. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:  
forming a strontium bismuth titanate oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate.

7. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the catalytic matrix is selected from the group consisting of lead, platinum, iridium and palladium.
8. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the catalytic matrix is selected from the group consisting of rhodium, nickel, and silver.
9. (Currently Amended) A method for oxidizing a portion of a silicon substrate comprising:  
changing the temperature of the silicon substrate to a temperature in a range of about 600°C. to 800°C.;  
providing a gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O, the gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O having a pressure of at least about five atmospheres for contacting at least a portion of the silicon substrate using a catalytically disassociated gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O; and  
contacting a portion of the gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O with a catalytic matrix consisting of at least one metal for forming a catalytically disassociated gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O for contacting at least a portion of the silicon substrate.
10. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising:  
forming a nitride layer on a portion of the silicon substrate.
11. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising:  
forming an oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate.
12. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising:  
forming a tantalum oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate.
13. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising:  
forming a barium strontium titanium oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate.

14. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising:  
forming a strontium bismuth titanate oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate.
15. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein the catalytic matrix is selected from the group consisting of lead, platinum, iridium and palladium.
16. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein the catalytic matrix is selected from the group consisting of rhodium, nickel, and silver.
17. (Currently Amended) A method for oxidizing a portion of a silicon substrate comprising:  
providing an atmosphere having a temperature of at least about 600°C.;  
providing a gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O, the gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O having a pressure of at least about five atmospheres;  
contacting at least a portion of the silicon substrate with a portion of the gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O having a pressure of at least about five atmospheres; and  
contacting a portion of the gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O with a catalytic matrix consisting of at least one metal for forming a catalytically disassociated gas atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>O for contacting at least a portion of the silicon substrate.
18. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 17, further comprising:  
forming at least one of a nitride layer on a portion of the silicon substrate, oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate, a tantalum oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate, a barium strontium titanium oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate, and a strontium bismuth titanate oxide layer on a portion of the silicon substrate.
19. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the catalytic matrix is selected from the group consisting of lead, platinum, iridium and palladium.

20. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the catalytic matrix is selected from the group consisting of rhodium, nickel, and silver.